

## MESSAGE FOR LENT

We talk a lot about repentance at Lent. That's because Jesus did too – that's how his ministry began. Ultimately, Jesus opens minds to experience “full-on” Repentance - that is Metanoia - a Mind-Shifting, Heart-Changing, Life-Transforming journey of faith to come to know the path to Salvation.

### 3/20 - THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT SCRIPTURE

EX: 3:1-8A, 13.15;  
1 COR 10:1-6, 10-12, LK 13:1-9

### WATCH ‘METANOIA’

We invite you to watch “Metanoia” produced by Fr. Dave Pivonka, TOR, president of the acclaimed Franciscan University in Steubenville. The series need not be viewed in sequence.

### Episode 4: Do you love me?

<https://thewildgooseisloose.com/metanoia> (Sign in to create a free account)

### PRAYER FOR GUIDANCE

MY LORD GOD, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. ....I will trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone. Amen.

—Thomas Merton



## THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT - GOSPEL OF LUKE

Some people told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with the blood of their sacrifices. Jesus said to them in reply, “Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were greater sinners than all other Galileans? By no means! But I tell you, if you do not repent, you will all perish as they did! Or those eighteen people who were killed when the tower at Siloam fell on them— do you think they were more guilty than everyone else who lived in Jerusalem? By no means! But I tell you, if you do not repent, you will all perish as they did!”

And he told them this parable: “There once was a person who had a fig tree planted in his orchard, and when he came in search of fruit on it but found none, he said to the gardener, ‘For three years now I have come in search of fruit on this fig tree but have found none. So cut it down. Why should it exhaust the soil?’

He said to him in reply, ‘Sir, leave it for this year also, and I shall cultivate the ground around it and fertilize it; it may bear fruit in the future. If not you can cut it down.’”

## SCRIPTURE MESSAGE REFLECTION

This Gospel story of the fig tree is about the patience of God, - Jesus reminds us the Father always believes in our future. God gives us a chance to change. Not just one opportunity, but many. Repent, but also grow....do not stand still...turn on this journey of “metanoia”.

Luke also wants us to see that, for God, repentance is a fruit of our faith....but for it to work, it needs attention, needs cultivating, etc. **Don't give up on yourself – God hasn't.....**

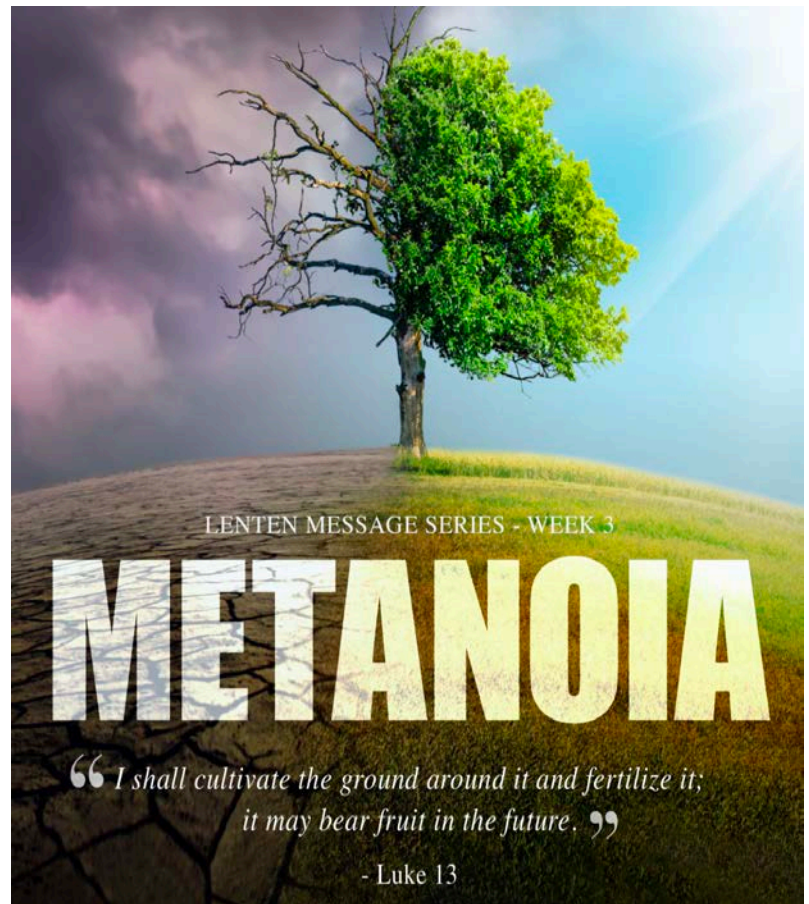
Yet don't miss out on another key part of Jesus' teaching – to wake us up to the judgment to come. There is an urgency. As well, God gives us second chances, but that is not a pass to keep on sinning. Take this matter seriously in this earthly season so we may live forever in the eternal garden.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**FIRST READING:** Moses and the burning bush.... In which unlikely places have you encountered God? Consider what makes a space “sacred ground”. Only places like the mountain of the Transfiguration? The burning bush of Moses? What about the fig tree garden?

**SECOND READING:** Paul says, remember the history of our ancestors ...and learn from it. If you and I are baptized into Christ – what does that mean? Do you understand the “fine print” of this covenant – that between baptism and eternity sacrifice is necessary? How have you sacrificed for Christ? Are the sacrifices you may have chosen for Lent ones that may bear fruit beyond the season?

**GOSPEL:** What aspect of your life – career, relationships, friendships, church – are bearing fruit right now? How can you fertilize the parts that are not? What is urgent in this “season” of life? Are you using the gift of time on earth well?



### ***Reflection from “Metanoia” – Video Series: Episode 4: Do you love me?***

- Do you know Jesus loves you? That God the Father loves you and forgives you? How do you know?
- Do you love, cultivate, nurture, in return? Who is your fig tree to love the rest of Lent (and beyond?) Yourself first? Who next?

### **Pray that you may say yes to what God wills for you**

March 25 celebrates the Feast of the Annunciation and the great “Fiat” – the yes of Mary that changed everything.... for her, for us.

The Annunciation marks the coming of the Angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary to announce to her the special mission God had chosen for her in being the mother of His only son. We are continually reminded of the importance of this feast to our salvation.

**Pray the rosary (or a decade) in small group, reflecting on the joyful mystery of the Annunciation - and your own Yes to the path to salvation.**